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Willem Oltmans at Washington news conference.
AP Wirephoto

Ford Allegedly Got Kennedy Plot Data

From Reuters

WASHINGTON—A Dutch journalist charged Tuesday that former President Gerald R. Ford had information from a secret U.S. intelligence report that could prove President John F. Kennedy's assassination was the product of a conspiracy.

Willem Oltmans said Ford had received a complete briefing about the assassination, including the identity of the person who had ordered it, when he was in the White House but did nothing about it.

He told a press conference that the information given to Ford was the same as that contained in a secret intelligence report that had been given to Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, the President's widow.

He said he had received the information about the murder plot and Ford's knowledge about it from a "reliable new witness" who was willing to come forward if President Carter gave him reasonable guarantees that his life would be safe.

Oltmans said he had found the new witness during his investigation of allegations that the killing had been the result of a conspiracy and not the act of a lone assassin.

The Warren Commission, of which Ford was a member when he was in the House of Representatives, concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald had acted alone in shooting the President in Dallas 14 years ago.

Oltmans added that he wanted to protect the identity of his new witness because another witness, who he contended had been involved in the plot, had died of a gunshot wound shortly after agreeing to testify before a congressional panel.

Oltmans told the House of Representatives Assassinations Committee in March that the dead man, George de Mohrenschildt, had told him that Oswald had acted on his instructions.

The panel later learned that De Mohrenschildt, a Russian university professor in Dallas, had undergone psychiatric treatment, and committee investigators placed little credence in his information.

Oltmans said that for this reason he was bypassing the committee and urging President Carter to reopen the investigation into the murder.

In response to questions he said he had conferred with Justice Department officials about his request for guarantees of safety for his witness but had received no commitment.